How Does Implementing A Peer Writing Process Influence A Fourth Grader’s Ability To Edit?

A Teacher Inquiry
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Teaching Context

This inquiry is taking place in a fourth grade classroom at Radio Park Elementary School in State College, Pennsylvania. Last year, eighty one percent of Radio Park third graders (current fourth graders) scored at or above proficiency level in reading, compared to the state percentage of sixty. In addition, eighty four percent of the fifth graders scored proficient on the writing PSSA in contrast to the state percentage of fifty-seven. These facts about Radio Park are vital to acknowledge when analyzing and interpreting my inquiry data revolving around the editing process.

Overall, I have a diverse group of twenty-six students (14 boys and 12 girls), who are enthusiastic learners. In this heterogeneous group of individuals, there are various students who receive support outside of our classroom. One student attends Title 1 for reading support. One student attends learning support for reading, writing, and spelling. Three additional students attend learning support for writing. Two of these students also receive spelling support.

Two students require a para-professional to aid with their reading and language arts work within the classroom. Therefore, every morning there is one para-professional helping students in my classroom. Within our classroom, there are three different reading levels: lower, middle, and higher achieving. I have students who read at, above, and below the fourth grade level. All of these aspects of literacy; reading, writing, and spelling, are relevant to my inquiry project.

Wondering:

How does implementing peer editing in a fourth grade classroom influence students’ editing abilities in the writing process?
**Sub-Questions**

- (1) How does the peer editing process affect the students’ general writing abilities?
- (2) What are my students’ current attitudes towards the editing process?
- (3) What do my students view as the definition of, or the process of, editing?
- (4) What do my students think the purpose of editing is?
- (5) How will the students’ attitudes towards writing be affected by implementing the peer editing process?
- (6) Will my students prefer peer or individual editing?

**Data Collection and Analysis Process**

There are numerous ways I collected data throughout my inquiry. First, I began my inquiry using surveys to collect data from both students and parents. Next, I collected data from student written work, to see how many grammatical, or spelling and punctuation, errors were included in one paragraph before the inquiry began. I utilized a baseline-editing paragraph to discover how many errors the students were able to find and correct before my inquiry began. Once my inquiry began, I collected data from the students’ work with my eight mini-lessons about editing. I tracked how many errors, based upon the day’s mini-lesson, were found and corrected by each student in paragraphs I created. Throughout the process, I continued to track the number of grammatical errors found in one paragraph of student work at a time. During the process of peer editing, I tracked how many errors students had in each paragraph, and how many of these errors a peer was able to accurately identify and correct. I concluded the inquiry by collecting data from an additional baseline-editing paragraph. Lastly, I used post-inquiry surveys to collect data from both students and parents once again.

**Student Surveys**

PRE-INQUIRY
At the beginning of my inquiry, I wanted to know the students’ feelings about the process of editing in general through a survey (please refer to Appendix A). Before I gave my students the survey, I emphasized to them that it was not an assessment, but rather a means for me to find out what they were thinking. I did not want the students to feel as though they had to choose what they might infer as the ‘correct’ answer, if that answer did not match their feelings towards the editing process.

In this survey, I asked the students what they thought the process of editing involved (Sub-question 3: What do my students view as the definition of, or the process of, editing?), because I wanted to be able to identify any misconceptions they may have had as soon as possible. As I tallied the answers that the students gave, I found that all of my students included spelling as part of the editing process. This evidence allowed me to identify spelling as an aspect of editing that the students would easily adapt to. A majority of the students also correctly identified evaluating for punctuation and questioning where the writing ‘makes sense’ as aspects of the editing process. I was able to identify that six of my students held the misconception that the pre-writing, or planning process, is part of the editing process. Shortly thereafter, I addressed this issue during a Morning Meeting with my class, as we discussed the difference between planning and editing in the writing process.

The initial survey was also a means to gauge how the students felt about editing (Sub-question 2: What are my students’ current attitudes towards the editing process?). While a clear majority of students answered they neither liked nor disliked the editing process, when asked to explain their answer, fifteen had a negative connotation towards editing, only four had a positive connotation, and seven had a mix of both positive and
negative. Many students felt that editing their work ‘takes too long’, is ‘boring’, or that it is simply ‘extra work’. It was vital to know how the students viewed the editing process so that I could address their concerns and feelings.

Finally, the initial survey asked the students to explain the purpose of the editing process (Sub-question 4: What do my students think the purpose of editing is?). While the answers among students did vary, a majority of student answers involved checking for errors (either general or listed specific errors) and readability. This question confirmed for me that a majority of the students held accurate depictions of the editing process.

After the initial survey on editing, I needed to introduce the idea of peer editing before I could ask the students questions about the process, so I used the platform of Morning Meeting to introduce my inquiry. I explained the topic of my inquiry was editing. I set expectations for surveys and class work that would revolve around my inquiry, as well as introduced the idea of peer editing.

I elaborated on the idea of peer editing, and shared the following quote with the students in order to add meaning to the process of editing: “Rewriting is the essence of writing well, it is where the game is won or lost.” (William Zinsser). As a class, we related editing to the amount of effort that could win or lose a tied basketball game with ten seconds left, emphasizing that the effort at the end can drastically affect the outcome of the writing, or game. Putting the idea of editing into terms of a popular sport seemed to truly engage the students, as many maintained direct eye contact and were smiling during this conversation.
Through the second pre-inquiry student survey, I wanted to find out how the students were feeling about peer editing, what they viewed as its purpose, and any questions or concerns they may have had (please refer to Appendix B). The students were almost evenly split between being excited and nervous about beginning the peer editing process (11 excited, 12 nervous). A majority of the students (18) thought the purpose of peer editing was to correct mistakes, provide suggestions and compliments for another student’s writing. When asked if they had any concerns, thirteen students said they were scared to make a mistake when editing someone else’s work. In order to address the students’ nervousness and questions about the process of peer editing, I held another Morning Meeting where we discussed these topics, which seemed to put the students at ease.

POST-INQUIRY

After we concluded the process of peer editing, I wanted to gather data about the students’ updated feelings (please refer to Appendix C). I wondered if the students’ outlook on the editing process, definition of the editing process, and feelings towards the writing process had changed at all, as well as their current method of preference for editing their writing (Sub-question 5: How will the students’ attitude towards writing be affected by implementing the peer editing process? Sub-question 6: Will my students prefer peer or individual editing?)

Parent Surveys

PRE-INQUIRY

In addition to collecting information from my students, I wanted to discover the parents’ perspectives of their child’s involvement with the writing and editing processes
At the beginning of my inquiry, parents felt that their child rarely discussed school writing projects at home. However, the students’ attitudes towards writing were perceived by the parents as lying between mostly positive and very positive (Sub-question 5: How will the students’ attitudes towards writing be affected by implementing the peer editing process?). This was surprisingly uncorrelated, as I perceived that if students had positive outlooks on writing, they would be discussing their projects more often at home. In addition, the parents reported the percentage of time their children edit their written work at home, in an even range from 100% of the time to 25% or less. I was intrigued to see if this would be affected by utilizing the peer editing process in school over the coming weeks.

**POST-INQUIRY**

At the conclusion of my inquiry, I wanted the opportunity for parents to re-examine their child’s attitudes towards editing and/or writing at home over the past several weeks. I utilized a parent survey to discover whether students had changed their pattern of discussing or editing written work at home, or discussing peer editing at home (please refer to Appendix E).

**Tracking Written Errors**

**PRE-INQUIRY**

Before the inquiry process began, I wondered how many grammatical errors (spelling and punctuation) were included in one paragraph of student work on average (please refer to Appendix F). I tallied the number of errors found in three pieces of work for each student, followed by finding the average of these errors per paragraph. Next, I wanted to find the average number of errors in a paragraph for our entire class. I wanted
to discover if the amount of errors found on average in my students’ work would be affected by utilizing the peer editing process (Sub-question 1: How does the peer editing process affect the students’ general writing abilities?).

**DURING INQUIRY**

I continued to tally data to determine how many grammatical errors were found in one paragraph throughout the process of my inquiry (please refer to Appendix G). I repeated the process of collecting and analyzing data from three pieces of written work for each student.

**POST-INQUIRY**

During the conclusion of the inquiry, I tallied data once more to determine the current number of grammatical errors being incorporated into my students’ writing (please refer to Appendix H). I collected data from two pieces of writing from each student, finding the average number of errors for each child, as well as the average number of errors for the class.

**Identifying Errors**

In order to find data to directly answer my wondering, ‘How Does Implementing A Peer Writing Process Affect A Fourth Grader’s Ability To Edit?’, I collected data based upon a series of mini-editing lessons I taught (please refer to Appendix O). The mini-lessons were based upon possessive apostrophes, commas, homophones, and spelling to refresh several aspects of grammar that were difficult for students. I based my mini lessons on material and concepts from both *Craft Lessons: Teaching Writing k-8* by Ralph Fletcher and Joann Portalupi, as well as *Just-Right Writing Mini-Lessons* by Cheryl Sigmon and Sylvia Ford.
PRE-INQUIRY

Before I began collecting data based upon the mini-lessons, I needed to determine where my students’ current abilities were. I created a baseline editing assessment, Susana’s Sick Pup based upon a lesson in *Writers Express* by Dave Kemper (please refer to Appendix I), to pre-assess the students. I tallied how many errors were correctly identified and corrected by each student, as well as the class average of errors found and corrected (please refer to Appendix J).

INQUIRY MINI-LESSONS

As I taught each editing mini-lesson, I tracked how many errors each student was able to correctly identify and correct (please refer to Appendix K). I calculated the average number of errors found by the class for each lesson, and the overall set of lessons. However, I was still wondering where the improvement was primarily originating from, and if the source could even be determined. Each mini-lesson’s editing activity related solely and directly to the modeling and practice of the lesson (for example, commas), whereas the baseline-editing paragraph assessed several aspects of grammatical errors at one time.

EDITING BASELINE REVISITED

In order to help answer how the peer editing process was affecting my students’ abilities to edit, I created another baseline assessment (please refer to Appendix L). I wanted to be able to evenly compare the students’ current abilities to their performance on the pre-inquiry baseline assessment. I tallied the number of errors each student was able to correctly find and fix, as well as the class average (please refer to Appendix N).

PEER EDIT
In the last scaffold of the peer editing process, the students were paired and edited one another’s written work for errors. This data collection relates directly to my wondering. Each student was given the opportunity to edit two paragraphs from one student within our classroom. I tallied the number of errors found and correctly fixed by the student, compared to the total number of errors found in the piece of writing, to determine the affects of the peer editing process on a student’s ability to edit (please refer to Appendix M).

**Claims and Evidence**

Below are the conclusions I was able to make from my inquiry process. Each claim is supported by specific evidence from my collected data.

*Claim 1:* Utilizing a peer editing process improves students’ abilities to write utilizing correct grammar.

*Evidence:*

1. Prior to the inquiry there were on average six grammatical errors found in one paragraph from my students (please refer to Appendix F).
2. The class, on average, included four errors in each paragraph of writing during the inquiry process (please refer to Appendix G).
3. The average number of grammatical errors found in the students’ writing decreased again, from four errors per paragraph during the inquiry to three errors per paragraph at the conclusion of the inquiry (please refer to Appendix H).
4. Overall, this is a decrease from six grammatical errors written in each student paragraph on average, to three errors in each paragraph. This is a significant decrease of
50%, which shows that utilizing the peer editing process increased the students’ abilities to write without grammatical errors.

**Claim 2:** Students are able to identify and correct grammatical errors in writing more often when utilizing a peer editing process.

**Evidence:**

1. Prior to the inquiry, my class on average was able to locate and correct 53% of errors found in a piece of written work (please refer to Appendix J). During each mini-lesson, the students were able to locate and correct 78% of errors, an increase of 25% (please refer to Appendix K).

2. During the second editing baseline assessment given at the conclusion of the editing process, students were able to identify and correct on average 70% of errors (please refer to Appendix L).

3. During the last stage of the scaffolding process, students were able to find and correct 79% of errors on average (please refer to Appendix M).

4. Therefore, utilizing the peer editing process increased the amount of errors my students could on average identify and correct by 26%.

**Claim 3:** Students enjoy the peer editing process.

**Evidence:**

1. On the student post-inquiry survey, 23 out of 25 students said they either ‘liked’ or ‘loved’ utilizing the peer editing process. The two students who said they ‘disliked’ peer editing, also said they find editing frustrating in general, and either do not like it in general or are frustrated by it (please refer to Appendix C).
2. During a class discussion after our peer editing work was completed, I took notes of student responses to the question, “How do you feel about using the peer strategy? Was it helpful?” The following are excerpts from my anecdotal notes of the conversation.

| -It was easier than normal editing  
| -Hard to edit your own work  
| -Skip past your own mistakes  
| -Thinking about your own content vs. errors with your own writing  
| -Working together to talk to someone else about writing is fun, easier |

The students had only positive things to share about the peer editing process that we utilized. Obviously, while all students did not share their feelings, many students had a positive outlook on peer editing.

3. According to the parent surveys, the number of students who have discussed their writing projects more than three times per week at home has increased from nine to thirteen since beginning the inquiry.

**Reflections and Future Teaching**

There are several things I have learned from completing this inquiry that will affect my future teaching. First, I have learned the importance of scaffolding when teaching students’ a new skill. Throughout the year, our class has utilized tools such as checklists in order to help students edit their own written work for grammatical errors. However, when I began my inquiry I decided that I would scaffold the process of editing with my students in order to ensure success. We began with the mini-lessons, where the students would learn one editing skill at a time through modeling, group practice, and independent practice. As we progressed through the inquiry, I gave the students increasing independence while utilizing the editing process, until finally the students
completed the entire editing process on peer work independently. I believe that the students were so successful with the peer editing process, because they truly learned how to edit through my scaffolding lessons.

In the future, I plan on emphasizing scaffolding in any lesson where a new skill is taught. It is important for the current developmental stage of my students that a new skill be taught using modeling, guided practice and discussion until positive independence is reached. I will use the process of scaffolding irrelevant to the grade level I teach in the future; I believe it is a vital part of successful teaching.

In addition to learning about scaffolding, I learned that peer editing is an effective means of helping your students develop a more critical eye when editing written work. Through my data, it is clear that the process of peer editing helped students to not only have less grammatical errors in their writing, but also to find and correct errors in written work. In addition to teacher and student self-editing processes, I plan on utilizing peer editing as a means of editing in my future classroom. In addition to improving my students’ abilities to edit, I believe the dependence on another student during the peer editing process teaches trust and further builds a class community.

As a teacher I also learned the importance of utilizing student surveys in relation to teaching. Through my surveys, I was able to identify worries or concerns that many of my students held about the peer editing process. By being aware of these worries and concerns, I was able to address them through the format of Morning Meeting. It was obvious through the body language and verbal reactions of my students, that they were very relieved by my answers to these concerns. Through the student surveys, I was able to identify and relieve numerous worries my students were holding, which I would have
otherwise been unaware of. I plan on utilizing student surveys when beginning new units of study or introducing new skills as a platform to connect personally with my students and discover their initial thoughts about our new studies.

At this point, I am intrigued with the possibilities of editing in the classroom. By watching how successful my students were with the peer editing process I implemented, I wonder what other editing programs I could employ with the same level of success. As I believe editing is a vital skill for students to learn, I am excited to explore other opportunities to help my students develop as well as refine their editing skills.

**Works Cited**


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Appendix A

Student Pre-Inquiry General Editing Survey

Please answer each of the questions about editing your writing. Your answers will not be judged or graded, and there is no correct/incorrect answer for any question. This survey is to help me understand how you think about editing.

1. Circle all answers that apply. The editing process involves:
   a. Reviewing your writing to check for correct spelling. (25)
   b. Making sure you capitalized all proper nouns. (19)
   c. Completing a planning process for writing, for example a 4-square. (6)
   d. Checking that every sentence has correct punctuation. (17)
   e. Re-reading to guarantee your writing ‘makes sense’. (20)

2. How do you feel about editing your writing?
   a. I enjoy it! I find it is very helpful to create my best writing. (4)
   b. It is okay; I don’t exactly enjoy it or dislike it. (19)
   c. I find it frustrating. I don’t like it or I don’t understand it. (2)

   Explain your answer. Why did you choose A, B, or C? (Answer in at least 1 complete sentence)
   Fifteen answers with negative connotations, including the following: it’s boring, it takes too long, it is extra work, do not know what to fix, spelling is hard.
   Four answers with positive connotations, including the following: helps me check my work, I like to have my best work done, happy to get it done.
   Seven answers had a mix of positive and negative connotations.

3. What do you think is the purpose of editing your writing? (Answer in at least 2 complete sentences)
   Various answers which included aspects of the following: spelling, making it better, adding description, getting everything right, getting better grades, finding mistakes, drafts look messy, making it readable, getting extra points, making it interesting.

4. On the back of the paper, write your definition of the editing process in a complete sentence.
   Various answers which included aspects of the following: checking for errors, spelling, punctuation, ensuring it makes sense, checking over my work, to improve writing, only used when typing on the computer.
Appendix B

Student Pre-Inquiry Peer Editing Survey

As we discussed in Morning Meeting on Monday, peer editing is when you take turns editing another student’s work. There are many benefits to this process. In this survey, I want to find out your individual thoughts about peer editing.

Circle one letter to answer each question:

1. How do you feel about beginning the peer editing process:
   a. Excited. (Circled by 11 students)
   b. Nervous. (12)
   c. Scared. (2)
   d. Other. Please write an adjective or two to describe how you are feeling if none of the above apply to you:

2. What do you see as the purpose of the peer editing process:
   a. Only to correct mistakes in another student’s writing.
   b. To correct mistakes and provide suggestions for another student’s writing. (7)
   c. To correct mistakes, provide suggestions and compliments for another student’s writing. (18)

Answer each of the following questions in at least one complete sentence:

1. How do you think you could help a friend by editing their writing?
   Various responses, including: finding mistakes (found in 15 responses), making suggestions (9), giving compliments (4), using your ‘fresh eyes’ (1), helping them to grow as a writer (1), to help them learn how to write better (1).

2. What are your worries or concerns about starting the peer editing process?
   Various responses, including: they won’t like my writing (found in 5 responses), spelling is hard for me (4), making a mistake (13), reading peer’s handwriting (8).

3. What is a question you have about the peer editing process?
   Various responses, including: how will it work, how will we pick partners, will we always have the same partner, use of editing symbols.
Appendix C

Student Post-Inquiry Editing Survey

Circle one letter to answer each question:

1. How do you feel about the peer editing process we have used?
   a. I loved it. 3
   b. I liked it. 20
   c. I disliked it. 2
   d. Other. Please write an adjective or two to describe how you are feeling if none of the above apply to you.

2. What do you see as the purpose of the peer editing process?
   a. Only to correct mistakes in another student’s writing. 0
   b. To correct mistakes and provide suggestions for another student’s writing. 5
   c. To correct mistakes, provide suggestions and compliments for another student’s writing. 20

3. How would you rather edit your written work?
   a. On my own (by myself) always. 3
   b. Sometimes with a partner. 14
   c. Always with a partner. 18

4. How do you feel about editing your writing?
   a. I enjoy it! I find it is very helpful to create my best writing. 8
   b. It is okay; I don’t exactly enjoy it or dislike it. 14
   c. I find it frustrating. I don’t like it or I don’t understand it. 3

   Explain your answer. Why did you choose A, B, or C? (Answer in at least 1 complete sentence)
   Various answers including it’s hard to find mistakes, I just want to be finished when I’m done writing, it is helpful, and it makes my writing better.

5. What do you think is the purpose of editing your writing? (Answer in at least 2 complete sentences)

Various answers including checking writing for mistakes, helping me do my best, makes my parents proud, and to get the best grade possible.
6. On the back of this paper, please write your definition of the editing process in a complete sentence. Various answers including re-reading writing to check for varied errors (spelling, homophones, commas, etc.).
Appendix D
Parent/Guardian Pre-Inquiry Survey

Dear Parents/Guardians,

As an intern in the PDS program, I am beginning an inquiry project to further my professional growth as a developing teacher. An inquiry project poses questions or ‘wonderings’ about an aspect of teaching. I have chosen to explore how utilizing the peer editing process will affect the students’ editing capabilities, as well as their general writing abilities.

In order to help me begin my inquiry process, I need to find where my students’ abilities currently lie. In addition to working with the students directly, I thought receiving feedback from the parents/guardians of the students would be beneficial. If you could take a few minutes to answer the following questions, and return the survey with your child by Thursday March 6th, it would be greatly appreciated. If you do not wish to complete the survey, please sign the bottom and return with your child by Thursday as well.

If you have any additional comments, questions, or concerns please feel free to email me at acl5003@psu.edu. Have a great day!

Thank you,
Miss Lundell

1. At home your child talks about our writing projects in school:
   a. 0-2 Times per week. (16 responses)
   b. 3-5 Times per week. (7 responses)
   c. More than 5 times per week. (2 responses)
   Comments:

2. Your child’s attitude towards writing (inside or outside of school):
   a. Very positive (6 responses)
   b. Mostly positive (16 responses)
   c. Sometimes positive (2 responses)
   d. Mostly negative (1 response)
   Comments:

3. Your child’s general attitude towards school:
   a. Very positive (11 responses)
   b. Mostly positive (12 responses)
   c. Sometimes positive (2 responses)
   d. Mostly negative
   Comments:

4(A). In general when your child completes an assignment at home that includes writing a paragraph, about what percentage of the time does your child re-read/edit their work?
   a. 100% of the time (7 responses)
   b. 75% of the time (7 responses)
   c. 50% of the time (6 responses)
   d. 25% or less (7 responses)
   Comments:
4(B). Who mostly initiates the re-read/edit?
   a. The child (10 responses)
   b. Other (parent/guardian, tutor, etc.): ______________________ (15 responses)
   c. I’m not aware if my child re-reads or edits, or my child does not re-read/edit.
   Comments: For ‘b’ there were 14 filled in as ‘parent’ and 1 for ‘tutor’ as initiator

Parent Signature:__________________________________________
Appendix E
Parent/Guardian Post-Inquiry Survey

Dear Parents/Guardians,

Thank you very much for your support with my last Inquiry survey! Over the past few weeks I have taught several mini-editing lessons to lead up to the actual peer editing work. These lessons always began with our theme song- Inspector Gadget. Now that the students have participated in the peer editing process, I am attempting to collect information/data about their behavior at home. I am interested to see whether their writing and/or editing behaviors have changed. Please take a few minutes to fill out the questions below, sign, and return with your child by

Thank you,
Miss Lundell

1. Since February your child has talked about our writing projects in school:
   a. 0-2 Times per week. 12
   b. 3-5 Times per week. 9
   c. More than 5 times per week. 4
   Comments:

2. Your child’s attitude towards writing (inside or outside of school):
   a. Very positive 7
   b. Mostly positive 14
   c. Sometimes positive 3
   d. Mostly negative 1
   Comments:

3. At home your child has talked about our peer editing work:
   a. 0 times 12
   b. 1-3 times 10
   c. More than 3 times 3
   Comments: If you selected 'b' or 'c', please briefly describe their attitude towards peer editing. Responses included that she/he is excited, likes it, loves it, thinks it is better than editing your own work.

4(A). In general when your child completes an assignment at home that includes writing a paragraph, about what percentage of the time does your child re-read/edit their work?
   a. 100% of the time 5
   b. 75% of the time 11
   c. 50% of the time 7
   d. 25% or less 2
   Comments:

4(B). Who mostly initiates the re-read/edit?
   a. The child 13
   b. Other (parent/guardian, tutor, etc.): 12
   c. I’m not aware if my child re-reads or edits, or my child does not re-read/edit. 0
   Comments:

Parent Signature:______________________________
Additional Comments:
### Appendix F

**Tracking Errors Pre-Inquiry**

The Number of Grammatical Errors Found in One Paragraph of Student Work Prior to Peer Editing Inquiry

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**Appendix G**

Tracking Errors During Inquiry

The Number of Grammatical Errors Found in One Paragraph of Student Work During Peer Editing Inquiry

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## Appendix H

Tracking Errors Post-Inquiry

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Appendix I
Identifying Errors Baseline Assessment

Susana’s Sick Pup

Susana has written a story about her new puppy, Sal, who is very sick. She wants to send her story to the local newspaper, but she thinks there might be some mistakes in her writing. Can you help her, by fixing all of her mistakes?

1. Circle words that are not spelled correctly. Write the correct spelling above the word.
2. Underline letters that need to be capitalized, circle letters that need to be lowercased.
3. Add punctuation if it is missing.
4. Separate run on sentences into two sentences.

In december I got a golden brown puppy and he was so tiny. I was trying to think of a name for him and my older brother suggested I use Sal. Sal is so mush fun, he loves to run all day and take long naps next to our fireplace and then he likes to eat a huge bowl of puppy food. Last week sal stoped eating his puppy food and chasing his bal. My mom and I took Sal to the Veterinarians office to see if she could help. Our vet gave us some medicine for Sal suggested we let Sal rest and sent us on our way. After a few days, Sal was back to his energetic self
## Appendix J
Identifying Errors Pre-Inquiry

Number of Errors Found/Fixed by Students During Baseline Editing Activity

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Identifying Errors During Inquiry

Number of Errors Found/Fixed by Students During Peer Editing Inquiry Mini Lessons

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Appendix L
Editing Baseline Revisited

Name: _________________________ Date:_____________________

Remember to edit for spelling, commas, and possessive apostrophes!

My Favorite Place to Go

Do you have a favorite place to go—a place with family good weather and fun things to do like crabbing? I'm glad I do. New Jersey is my favorite place for many reasons. The first reason is my family. Over half of my family lives there. When I visit my cousin’s and I laugh play all day and eat ice cream at night. My grandparents house is right down the street from the beach. I also think the weather is great! Instead of being hot and sweaty, it’s always cool and moist. For all these reasons New Jersey is my favorite place to go. If you don’t have a favorite place, I think you should search for one.
## Appendix M

Identifying Errors During Peer Edit

Number of Errors Found/Fixed by Students During Inquiry Peer Edit

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<td>2/3</td>
<td>4/4</td>
<td>86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X</td>
<td>6/9</td>
<td>5/10</td>
<td>58</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Y</td>
<td>3/4</td>
<td>5/6</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Average</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
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</table>
Appendix N
Identifying Errors Post-Inquiry

Number of Errors Found/Fixed by Students During Conclusion Inquiry Baseline Editing Activity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student</th>
<th>Possessive Apostrophes, Spelling/Homophones, Commas (Out of 14 Errors)</th>
<th>Percentage of Errors Found and Correctly Fixed</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4/10/08</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
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<td>43</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
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<td>79</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>G</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>H</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>64</td>
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<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>64</td>
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<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>K</td>
<td>8</td>
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<td>N</td>
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<td>n/a</td>
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<tr>
<td>W</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>X</td>
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<td>57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Average</td>
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<td>70</td>
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</table>
Appendix O

Sample Lesson Plans from Mini-Lessons

03.25.08 Apostrophe Modeling
Designer/Author: Allison Lundell 03/22/2008 11:45:00 AM EDT TaskStream - Tools of Engagement

BASIC INFORMATION

Grade/Level:
4

Date to be Taught:
Tuesday March 25, 2008

Time Frame:
1 class period. 20 Min. per class.

Subject:
Language Arts (English)

Topic:
Possessive Apostrophe Usage

Summary:
I will begin by reviewing the three rules of apostrophe usage. Then the students will find all of the apostrophes in an overhead example, and identify which rule they fit under. Next, the students will find where apostrophes need to go in a passage on the overhead. Finally, the students will write three sentences of their own, one for each of the apostrophe rules.

OUTCOMES/OBJECTIVES AND STANDARDS

Objectives/Learning Outcomes:
Students will know how to use apostrophes with singular and plural possessives.

Standards:

PA- Pennsylvania Academic Standards
- Subject : Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening
- Area 1.5: Quality of Writing
- Grade 1.5.5: Grade 5

Standard F.: Edit writing using the conventions of language.
- Spell common, frequently used words correctly.
- Use capital letters correctly.
- Punctuate correctly (periods, exclamation points, question marks, commas, quotation marks, apostrophes).
- Use nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions, prepositions and interjections properly.
- Use complete sentences (simple, compound, declarative, interrogative, exclamatory and imperative).

Prerequisite Skills:
Students will need to know the difference between a plural and singular noun.

ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT LEARNING

Assessment Activities/Rubric:
My formal assessment for this activity will be the student created sentences.

MATERIALS AND TECHNOLOGY

Student Materials:
Piece of notebook paper, pencil

Teacher Materials:
overhead projector, apostrophe powerpoint
Attachments

1. apostrophe powerpoint

Use of Technology (where appropriate):

* Materials and resources:
  overhead projector screen
* Technology resources:
  PowerPoint

LESSON SEQUENCE AND PROCEDURES

Introduction (Hook):
My hook for all inquiry mini lessons will be the Inspector Gadget theme song. Details follow of use in lesson.

Sequence of Instruction (Step 1, Step 2...):
While the students are in PE I will get the overhead projector screen and song ready

The notes for the lesson follow, and the powerpoint will accompany
10:20
After I pick up the students from PE, I will tell them we will be working on editing when we get back into the classroom. You may get your snack, and then go to your seat.

10:25
I will tell the students that throughout an editing process, you often find yourself transforming into a special role. You will often find yourself transforming from a fourth grade student in room 2, into a specially trained detective or inspector. You will become specially trained in ways to find and correct mistakes in writing.

Does anyone know any famous inspectors or detectives?

Well I know one special inspector- Inspector Gadget. He is going to be our mascot for editing. In order to help us reach back into our brains and find the ways we have been trained to find and correct mistakes, we will listen to the Inspector Gadget theme song.

Inspector Gadget wanted some rules to accompany his song. He decided that if his song made you get silly instead of focused and ready to inspect some writing, that we could no longer use his song. When the song finishes you must be in your seat, and have your eyes on me, ready to begin our work.

Everyone understand? So, no silliness, and you must be ready to go when it is over.

So let's listen to the song together.

10:30
Ok, we should all be ready to begin. I hope you have your inspector goggles on to help you edit some writing.

Today we are going to be working with apostrophes.

Does anyone know what an apostrophe does? When is it used?

They are used with possessive nouns, or nouns that show who or what owns something. This is the type of apostrophe we will be working with today.

They can also be used with contractions, like 'are not'-'aren't.'

There are 3 different rules for apostrophes that are possessive.

The first, form the possessive of a singular noun (when a noun means only one - boy, cat, star, chair). For these you add an apostrophe and an s. (Reveal on overhead).
Ask for singular noun examples from class. Show how to add 's to make possessive along with what they are possessing.
ex: bike- bike's tires, boy- boy's bat

The second and third rule deal with plural nouns (when a noun means more than one- cats, windows, toes).

A. If the plural noun ends in an s, you add the apostrophe to the end of the word.
ex: boys- boys' shorts, babies- babies' cradle

Ask for plural nouns that end in s from students. Show how to add apostrophe on ending.

B. If the plural noun does not end in an s, then add apostrophe and an s.
ex: men- men's watches, children- children's toys

Ask for examples of plural nouns that do not end in s. Add apostrophe s.

Does anyone have any questions so far?

10:37
The next thing we are going to do is practice identifying the three different rules in a piece of writing.

(Put up 1st passage).

Let's read the passage first. Ask student to read passage aloud.

Now we will warm up our inspector skills by finding all of the possessive apostrophes in this writing.

Raise your hand when you have found one.

Ask another student to identify which rule it falls under.
possessive of singular noun- apostrophe s
possessive of plural noun, ends in s- apostrophe
possessive of plural noun, no s- apostrophe s

Did we find uses of all three rules?

I'm glad that your inspector skills are warm, you will really need them now!

This second passage is missing it's apostrophes altogether, and perhaps even some apostrophe s combinations.
Ask student to read aloud.

Read each sentence at a time, ask if there is a place that needs an apostrophe or apostrophe s.

Identify with rule each time.

Write them in on overhead as we go.

11:45

Now you're really going to be putting your inspector skills from today to the test. I want you to write three sentences. Each sentence needs to use one of the apostrophe rules, and you must use all three.

**Requirements for sentences, based on time:**

- 11:45 or after, sentences do not have to go together, make sense together. Three separate sentences.

- 11:45 or before: sentences must be written as a mini-paragraph. They have to make sense together. One sentence needs to be compound.

Closure/Wrap Up:
I will ask the students to put their sentences in the language arts basket, and get ready for math!

Independent Practice (where appropriate):

Differentiated Instruction:
The freedom of choice allowed in sentence creation will allow students to write according to their own ability. In addition the students’ ability to pick up on the rules will reflect in the amount of time it takes to complete the activities. Therefore, if there is extra time at the end, the sentence requirements are more difficult.

Possible Follow-Up Activity:
We will continue our editing mini-lessons.

LEsson analysis and Reflection

Analysis:
The students were able to interact in conversation, applying the concept of possessive apostrophes to both singular and plural nouns. All goals of the lesson were met!

Reflection:
The students seemed to truly enjoy the hook of using the Inspector Gadget theme song. Many of the students were smiling and/or dancing around to the song. There was a high amount of participation throughout the lesson. The students also seemed to enjoy interacting through the power point as a lesson tool. In addition, the students wanted to share so many examples throughout the discussion I often had the students we had to stop and move on in order to get through the intended lesson, which is a contrast to a typical lesson in our classroom.

04.02.08 Comma Use
Designer/Author: Allison Lundell 03/30/2008 04:17:00 PM EDT  TaskStream - Tools of Engagement

Date to be Taught:
Wednesday April 2, 2008

Grade/Level:
4

Subject Area:
Language Arts (English)

Time Frame:
30 minutes, 1:30-2:00 pm

Objectives/Learning Outcomes:
Students will be able to apply the correct usage of commas in relation to the following two rules:
A comma may be used between two independent clauses which are joined by coordinating conjunctions such as the following: and, but, or, nor, for, so, and yet.
A series (three or more items listed in a sentence) requires the use of commas to separate the items.

Student Assessment:
I will ask the students to write at the top of each paper:

Writer's Name:____________________

Editor's Name:____________________

I will collect the papers to check for accurate placement of commas.

Key Standards (3 maximum):
PA- Pennsylvania Academic Standards
   • Subject : Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening
   • Area 1.5: Quality of Writing
   • Grade 1.5.5: Grade 5

Standard F.: Edit writing using the conventions of language.
   · Spell common, frequently used words correctly.
   · Use capital letters correctly.
   · Punctuate correctly (periods, exclamation points, question marks, commas, quotation marks, apostrophes).
   · Use nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions, prepositions and interjections properly.
   · Use complete sentences (simple, compound, declarative, interrogative, exclamatory and imperative).

Materials and Use of Technology:

   * Materials and resources:
     notebook paper, pencil, clipboard for students

     powerpoint, projector
   * Technology resources:
     PowerPoint
   * The number of computers required is 1.

Sequence of Instruction Including Hook and Closure:
Before lesson: set up laptop, with projector ready.

1:35
1. Hook: I will play the Inspector Gadget theme song and ask students to sit on the back rug.

2. Today we will be working with commas. Commas have many uses, but today we are going to concentrate on just two.

3. I will tell the students that writers sometimes set the stage for their readers with an introductory phrase or clause before starting the main content of a sentence. When you do this, you have to use a comma to set off the introduction from the main part of the sentence.

4. Introductory clause has both a subject and a verb. Introductory phrase doesn't have both a subject and verb, only one or the other.

1:40
5. I will review three examples of sentences with introductory clauses or phrases. I will ask a student to read each sentence. I will ask another student to point out where the introductory clause or phrase is. I will circle where the comma lies in the sentence.

6. Next, I will have the sentences that have introductory phrases or clauses and ask students to tell me where the introduction ends and a comma should lie.

1:45

7. We are now going to talk about the second use of commas. Remember there are many more, but we are just talking about two common uses today.

8. Three or more items listed in a sentence are called a series. A series requires the use of commas to separate the items. Two items is not considered a series. Two items do not require a comma when the items are connected by a conjunction.

9. Review examples from powerpoint.

10. Three or more items listed in a sentence is a series, and requires comma use.

11. Review examples from powerpoint.

1:50

Time to put on your inspector googles, and practice our skills. You are going to write two sentences. One sentence that has an introductory clause or phrase, and one sentence that has a series in it. I do NOT want you to use commas. Then you will switch papers with a partner and add commas using a COLORED pencil correctly to their sentences. Once you are both done adding commas, check each other's work and discuss if you agree or not.

I will randomly assign partners using the sticks and dismiss students.

Once I call you and your partner's name, get a colored pencil, regular pencil, and a piece of notebook paper. I want you to spread out, no more than one group at a table.

Attachments

1. Commas Powerpoint

Teacher Assessment:
If I were to teach this lesson again I would change how I asked the students to complete their written work. I wish I would have instead created a worksheet to provide more structure for the writing. I would have included at the bottom of the worksheet a check list for the students to follow, so I could ensure that they had not only written their sentences, added commas to their partner's sentences, but also had discussed with their partner. In addition I wish I would have had clearer directions for the students to work on once they were done their sentences.
Comma Powerpoint Slide Outlines:
*Editing Inspector Time*
Commas!

*Introductory Phrases and Clauses*

- Set the stage for readers
- Come before main content of a sentence
- Need to use a comma to offset introduction

*Introductory Phrases and Clauses*

- Introductory Clause: contains both a subject and a verb
- Introductory Phrase: does not contain both a subject and a verb

*Introductory Phrases and Clauses*

- Example Sentences:
  - When you return the call, be sure to tell Ray that practice is at 6 p.m.

*Introductory Phrases and Clauses*

- Example Sentences:
  - On the highest shelf in the school’s library, you will find the latest book by Mem Fox.

*Introductory Phrases and Clauses*

- Example Sentences:
  - After staying with grandmother for three weeks, I am ready to go home.

*Introductory Phrases and Clauses*

- Where should the comma go?
  - Now that the coach has posted the rules we know what to do.

*Introductory Phrases and Clauses*

- Where should the comma go?
  - On his way through the long hallway on the first floor Mr. Cook called to remind me to lock the door.

*Introductory Phrases and Clauses*

- Where should the comma go?
  - In the dirty overflowing lake water there appears to be much debris.
Series

- 3 or more items listed in a sentence
- Commas separate the items
- Important: 3 is the magic number; less than three items is not considered a series

Not A Series

- Examples:
  - I have three apples and two pears.
  - Susan ate a piece of both vanilla and chocolate cake.
  - Would you like to wear a blue or purple dress?

Series

- Example Sentence:

  - I gave Jane a book, a pencil, and a ruler.

Series

- Example Sentences:

  - John ran from the bear, the tiger, the lion, and the kangaroo.

Series

- Example Sentences:

  - Give me a pair of scissors, a bottle of glue, and a piece of paper.

Series

- Where should the comma(s) go?

  - Susie has a lipstick a handkerchief and mirror in her purse.

Series

- Where should the comma(s) go?

  - I like sausage black olives and onions on my pizza.

Series

- Where should the comma(s) go?

  - I like to ice skate on the pond sled down snowy hills and build huge snowmen.

Your Task

- Write 2 sentences
  - 1 using an introductory clause or phrase
I using a series
Do NOT use commas

Your Task

- You will switch papers with a partner
- Add commas to your partner’s sentences
- Discuss with partner where you put commas and why

Review

- Introductory Phrase: A group of words that cannot stand alone found at the beginning of a sentence. Ex: Hoping to improve his writing, ..... 
- Introductory Clause: Contains a subject and a verb. As we walk into the museum, ..... 
- Series: Sentence with a list of at least 3 items
Appendix P
Inquiry Brief

Context:

My class consists of 26 fourth graders—14 boys and 12 girls. In this heterogeneous group of students, there are various students who receive support outside of our classroom. One student attends Title 1 for reading support. One student attends learning support for reading, writing, and spelling. Three additional students attend learning support for writing. Two of these students also receive spelling support.

Two students require a Para-professional to aid with their reading and language arts work within the classroom. Therefore, every morning there is one Para-professional helping various students in my classroom. Within our classroom, there are three different reading levels: lower, middle, and higher achieving. Therefore, I have students who read at, above, and below the fourth grade level. All of these aspects of literacy; reading, writing, and spelling, are relevant to my inquiry project.

Overall, I have a diverse group of twenty-six students who are enthusiastic learners. In addition to being a joy to teach, these students ‘keep me on my toes’ with their strong academic performance. This class reinforces my delight in teaching.

Rationale:

Before the winter break, our students began constructing their own narrative, based upon the Iktomi series by Paul Goble. Upon the return from winter break, we distributed an editing checklist to the students, who were to complete one item on the checklist at a time. After completing one item on the checklist (for example, capitalizing proper nouns), the students were instructed to bring their edited narrative to a teacher to
be reviewed. I constantly found numerous mistakes that the students recognized and were able to correct immediately, when the mistakes were pointed out to them directly.

After this pattern continued throughout the several-week editing process, I became determined to find a way to improve my students’ editing abilities. I found that the students often skipped over mistakes they are capable of identifying and correcting, instead of utilizing a critical eye to examine their own work. I noticed this pattern began to persist throughout the entirety of language arts written work.

It is very important for fourth grade students to begin utilizing a critical eye while editing their writing. By the time students reach fourth grade, they have developed major landmarks in their writing abilities. These developments allow the students to transfer some writing focus from the creation to the refining process. In addition, as the students progress into the upper grades of elementary school, they will be more responsible for producing work, which they will solely edit. I began to wonder how I could influence the students’ editing performance. I came across the idea of peer editing during a discussion with another fourth grade intern, who employs the strategy occasionally in her classroom.

**Wondering:**

How does implementing peer editing in a fourth grade classroom affect student’s editing abilities in writing, as well as their writing in general? (Data: Data collected over a month regarding the number of errors initially written into work, edited out of work by student, edited out of work by peer. Also student artifact writing.)

**Sub-Questions:**

- What are my students’ current attitudes towards the editing process? (Data: Surveys, Morning Meeting Conversations)
- What do my students view as the definition of, or the process of, editing? (Data: Surveys, Morning Meeting Conversations)

- What do my students think the purpose of editing is? (Surveys, Morning Meeting Conversations)

- How will the students’ attitude towards writing be affected by implementing the peer editing process? (Surveys, Morning Meeting Conversations)

- What influences affect a fourth grader’s interest in completing a peer editing strategy? (Surveys, Morning Meeting Conversations)

- Is peer editing more effective when the teacher or the students choose partners? (Collecting data regarding the number of errors found in both scenarios, student artifacts)

- Will the students’ attitude about a finished piece of work be affected by implementing the peer editing process? (Surveys, Morning Meeting Conversations)

**Projected Timeline:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Task</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/16-2/23 (Survey Week)</td>
<td>Create and copy initial surveys for students about general editing process (what is it, why do it, how do you feel about it).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Distribute and collect results from students’ surveys.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Create and copy initial surveys for students about peer editing process (how do you feel about it, what are your interests, your concerns).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Distribute and collect results from students’ surveys.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Create and copy survey for parents about their child’s writing and editing abilities, as well as their interests/concerns about peer editing in the classroom.</td>
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<td>Distribute and collect results from parents’ surveys.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Compile results from surveys.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Collect data: How many grammar, spelling, and punctuation mistakes in students’ unedited and edited work? (Found in one paragraph: 4-6 sentences)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Continue researching and refining wondering.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/23-3/1</td>
<td>Finalize layout of plan for and incorporation of peer editing process</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
in classroom.

Collect data: How many grammar, spelling, and punctuation mistakes in students’ unedited and edited work? (Found in one paragraph: 4-6 sentences)

Continue researching and refining wondering.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3/1-3/8</th>
<th>Begin to introduce concentration of general editing in classroom.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collect data: How many grammar, spelling, and punctuation mistakes in students’ unedited and edited work? (Found in one paragraph: 4-6 sentences)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Incorporate discussion of editing into Monday’s morning meeting. Discuss purpose of editing, professional writer inspirational editing quote of the week, and form of peer editing.</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Incorporate editing worksheets in morning work to gauge current abilities of students.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>3/8-3/15</th>
<th>Collect resources/materials needed to introduce peer editing into classroom.</th>
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<tr>
<td>*Spring Break</td>
<td>Catch up on compiling data.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Use peer-editing strategy, at least two times this week.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collect data: How many mistakes (grammar, spelling, punctuation) found, how many not found in peer work, as well as in student’s initial self edit. How many mistakes in initial written work? (Found in one paragraph of each work)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional writer inspirational editing quote of the week during morning meeting Monday. Ask for questions/concerns.</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>3/22-3/29</th>
<th>Use peer-editing strategy, at least two times this week.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collect data: How many mistakes (grammar, spelling, punctuation) found, how many not found in peer work, as well as in student’s initial self edit. How many mistakes in initial written work? (Found in one paragraph of each work)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Professional writer inspirational editing quote of the week during morning meeting Monday. Ask for questions/concerns.</td>
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<th>3/29-4/5</th>
<th>Use peer-editing strategy, at least two times this week.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collect data: How many mistakes (grammar, spelling, punctuation)</td>
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</table>
found, how many not found in peer work, as well as in student’s initial self edit. How many mistakes in initial written work? (Found in one paragraph of each work)

Compile data collected so far.

Professional writer inspirational editing quote of the week during morning meeting Monday. Ask for questions/concerns.

Data collected over a month regarding the number of errors initially written into work, edited out of work by student, edited out of work by peer.

Prepare and distribute parent survey about peer editing process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4/5-4/12 *Inquiry Draft Due, 4/12</th>
<th>Prepare, distribute, and collect surveys for students about: general writing process, editing process, and peer editing process.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collect parent surveys.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Compile survey results.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Complete Inquiry Paper Draft.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/12-4/19</td>
<td>Continue editing Inquiry Paper.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Begin preparing Inquiry Presentation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4/19-4/26 *Inquiry Conference</td>
<td>Prepare for Inquiry Conference Saturday 4/26!!!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data Collection Ideas:

- Student survey about general writing process (how do you feel about it, what do you enjoy/dislike). At the beginning and the end of the process.

- Student survey about general editing process (what is it, why do it, how do you feel about it). At the beginning and the end of the process.

- Student survey about peer editing process (how do you feel about it, interests, concerns), at the beginning of the process.
- Student survey about peer editing process (how do you feel about it, what was enjoyable/beneficial, what did you dislike, what would you change), at the end of the process.

- Survey home to parents about peer editing process (beginning and end of process).

- Data collected over a month regarding the number of errors initially written into work, edited out of work by student, edited out of work by peer.

- Conversations during morning meetings on Monday mornings.

- I will collect examples of student work (artifacts), which demonstrate the progress students have made in writing.
Appendix Q

Annotated Bibliography


The *Craft Lessons* text is broken into three sets of information- kindergarten through second grade, third and fourth grades, and finally fifth through eighth grades. I will focus on the section designated for the third and fourth grades. The section opens with a poignant introduction of the changing social capacities of third and fourth graders, and how these changes are often reflected in their writing, and impact the writing produced by these students. I will scrutinize this information when contemplating how to organize my peer editing process. There are twenty-six mini writing lessons dedicated to teaching third and fourth grade students how to create solid writing during the writing process, instead of focusing on the revision process. Each mini-lesson begins with a discussion, and then provides a ‘How to Teach It’ section, and finally a resource section. After analyzing my students’ work, I will revisit the Craft lessons for support in guiding my students to be better writers, possibly incorporating mini-lessons into the time frame of my inquiry project to further strengthen my students’ abilities to produce sound writing.


Heard begins her book with an excellent section discussing students’ thoughts and feelings about revision, which I plan to re-examine before introducing my peer editing plan to the students. My students’ reaction to the peer editing process is one of my
concerns, and I believe Heard’s research will be helpful in allowing me to lessen their possible anxieties. The appendix of this text holds many valuable tools for my inquiry, including numerous inspirational quotes from professional writers about their revision processes, as well as a peer conference revision format, and a process/progress revision sheet. The bulk of the text includes a large range of strategies for revising a piece of written work. Each strategy is put into context of a personal story from Georgia Heard’s teaching career, but does not include specific directions in teaching the strategy to students.


  Kellaher’s text is a collection of reproducibles, games, puzzles, and manipulatives that could be used in the classroom to help students hone crucial writing and spelling skills. A majority of the activities are designed for a student to complete independently. Once I am able to analyze the gaps in my students’ writing and editing abilities, I plan to return to this book to find activities, which will help to narrow these ability gaps. On the other hand, I could also use these activities to gauge the frail points in my students’ abilities with spelling, grammar, and punctuation. The worksheets could be utilized as morning work, or assigned during STAR time.

While this text includes an assortment of writing topics, it incorporates a powerful section on revising and editing. Similar to Georgia Sandmann, the authors stress the difference between revising and editing, which they feel is often overlooked by both students and adults. This strategy begins with a self-revision process, and includes a revision checklist. Next, the writer should conference with a peer. This section stresses the opportunity for students to help one another, and includes conference guidelines and response sheets. Finally, Writers Express supplies an editing and proofreading skill segment. I plan on reflecting on and incorporating aspects of the checklists, guidelines, and response sheets included in the Writers Express book, as I create my own to utilize in my inquiry project.


Painter stresses that peer editing is a way to strengthen the students’ critical eye, and should be incorporated in every classroom. Furthermore, Painter describes that peer editing helps to build the writing skills of the students. By practicing peer editing, the students are able to focus on their own work through the eye of an editor, rather than the eye of the author. Painter’s theories align with my inquiry directly, although there is no evidence provided in her writing. I plan on utilizing Painter’s information to formally support the basis of my wondering.

Sandmann’s article details a revising strategy she has created entitled, the ‘Focused Question Card Strategy’ (FQC), which she claims can be applied to any student from the fourth grade through the graduate level. The article stresses the different embodiments of the revision and editing processes. Revision is the art of creating a clear message, while editing focuses on creating grammatically correct work. Sandmann’s strategy first focuses on the revision process, which allows students to generate a concentration in their revision (written on the question card). This process begins with a partner conference, discussing the question card crafted by the author. The FQC strategy continues with a partner conference revolving around an editing question card. I plan on utilizing aspects of how Sandmann sets up her peer editing conferences, particularity the aspects of mutual respect and clarity of purpose within the conferences.


This book of writing mini-lessons includes two sections relevant to my inquiry- ‘Making Writing Cleaner and Clearer (Conventions)’ and ‘Polishing and Publishing Our Writing’. Each topic includes a skill focus, materials and resources, and quick hints, in addition to the steps to complete the mini-lesson. Section Three, entitled ‘Making Writing Cleaner and Clearer’ will be useful when I am locating materials for mini-lessons, or to create worksheets to help my students with aspects of proper writing technique. In
addition, the ‘Polishing and Publishing Our Writing’ section emphasizes that students should be in charge of applying the basics of editing. Sigmon and Ford chose to combine the aspects of editing and revising into one peer conference, which utilizes a checklist. I will consider utilizing a variation of the idea, “three pluses and a wish”, in my peer editing strategy, which outlines three positive observations and one aspect that could be improved in a peer’s writing.


This all-inclusive writing text includes three sections relevant to my wondering: spelling and capitalization, grammar, and punctuation. I believe this text would be best described as a reference guide for students. The information is clearly laid out, by specific writing topic, in a format similar to an encyclopedia. I can see myself copying, and providing sections of this text, for my students to reference during the editing process. The text could provide students with fast, reliable, and easily understood support.


I received Anne Whitney’s contact information from PDA and PDS coordinator, Jim Nolan. Ms. Whitney is a former high school English teacher, and currently resides at Penn State as an assistant professor of LLED. Her research addresses written composition, the teaching of writing, and professional development in language arts. I contacted Ms. Whitney on Wednesday, February 6, 2008. Ms. Whitney has provided me
with information regarding books to research, and has agreed to an interview. We are still discussing an exact day and time to meet, but plan on meeting in the next two to four weeks. I plan on discussing my completed research at that point, as well as any work she has accomplished with editing, particularly peer editing in the elementary setting.


Williams’ text is formatted into 36 weekly sections, with five practice items for each day of the week. Obviously, I will not utilize the text as Williams intended, but I do believe it can be beneficial for my inquiry project. Throughout the 36-week program, there are activities that cover sentence editing, punctuation, and grammar. I can use these activities to help gauge weaknesses in my students’ writing and/or abilities, track the progress of my students’ abilities to write/edit correctly, and teach my students aspects of proper writing and/or editing skills.